COVENTRY EAST ASIAN FILM SOCIETY

Coventry East Asian Film Society were awarded with the Best Student Film Society award at 2012’s National Conference in recognition of their success in bringing Asian cinema to new audiences, through screenings, talks and Q&As, as well running their own film festival in conjunction with the distributors Third Window Films. Members of the Coventry East Asian Film Society have interviewed film-makers, published reviews, and gained professional experience in producing audio and video content.

INCEPTION

The Coventry University East Asian Film Society was founded in 2009 by students of the Media and Communications department in Coventry University under the guidance and with the help of lecturer Spencer Murphy. The society was established with the aim of promoting and celebrating cultural diversity by raising awareness of East Asian cinema and tradition among students of Coventry University. Initially, this aim was achieved by organising free weekly film screenings of Asian films, open to all students, usually followed by discussions or Q&A sessions with guest speakers from the field of East Asian cinema, among which distribution company managers Adam Torel of Third Window Films and Joey Leung of Terracotta Films (partners and sponsors of the society), as well as film journalists and critics John Berra, Jasper Sharp and Colette Balma. In addition, those guest speakers delivered short presentations on their particular fields of work, i.e. Japanese cinema, contemporary Korean film-making, etc, to all students attending the screenings. The students could also participate in discussions with those experts, as well as express their views on the screened films, write reviews on them and each week the society would choose a winner among the writers to receive a sponsor DVD and be published on a professional film review website. During its second year, the society grew more professional and more dedicated to expanding beyond its initial programme of weekly film screenings, by adding more events and participating in more festivals, thus not only bringing more knowledge to the students of the university, but also increasing the members' professional employability in their desired field.

FESTIVALS

In May 2011, the society received accreditation to cover the Far East Film Festival in Udine, Italy, with an increased number of participating students, covering the whole ten days of the festival in two different teams. Due to the recognition of the members' work during the previous festival edition, the students of the East Asian Film society were now treated as fellow colleagues and in addition to being given access to guest speeches, interviews and panels as official media crew, they were also interviewed by the Far East Film Festival for their participation and filmed and photographed by the representatives of the festival and the freelance media guests.

EMPLOYABILITY AND PRACTICAL SKILLS

In addition to representing Coventry University in festivals in London and abroad, the society has increased its efforts not only in raising awareness of Asian culture among the university students, but also in opening its doors to helping students acquire more practical skills and gain more employability, as related to their field of media study. In addition to producing a newsletter and audio/video interviews and clips, the society has partnered with two external websites, CineVue and iCov, where students' contributions are published on a semi-regular basis, giving them the opportunity to improve their writing skills and also receive recognition from the industry.

In November 2011 they were part of the Zipangu Film Festival in London as well as of the 14th edition of the Udine Far East Film Festival in Italy in April 2012 where they covered the whole 10 days of the event and interviewed the established Hong Kong director and producer Johnnie To as well as many others. The continuing participation in national and international events proves that the ongoing work of the society is notable and the impact on both internal and external audiences is very positive.